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Barry Blesses The 'Splinters'

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WASHINGTON — Former

Senator Barry Goldwater is riding two entries in the cavalcade of splinter organizations springing up within the Republican party.

While National Chairman Ray Bliss and other party chiefs are sharply deploring this disquieting fragmentation, the 1964 presidential candidate is now on record as heartily favoring two splinter elements.

In addition to being honorary chairman of the Free Society Association, at whose recent widely-publicized launching he presided, Goldwater also has given his blessing to the lately-formed American Conservative Union, headed by former Representative Donald Bruce, Ind.

The Arizona bestowed this endorsement in a letter that ACU directors plan to publish at their meeting here later this month.

Among Republican insiders Goldwater's embracing of these separate groups is viewed as motivated by the desire to maintain the status of foremost conservative exponent in the party.

However, while Conservative Union leaders welcomed his still-unannounced approval, they are not rushing to put themselves under his banner.

They are making it clear they are willing to cooperate with all like-minded organizations, but intend to operate strictly on their own. Chairman Bruce pointedly expressed this policy as follows:

"It is not the purpose or function of the ACU to replace or compete with existing conservative organizations. It is to be separate from, but to work with, the many fine conservative organizations at the national, state and local levels. Our intent is to deal with issues. We aim to influence, not to dominate."

Also significantly, ACU leaders are indicating they are seeking a "vigorous new conservative standard-bearer."

As possibilities they mention Representative Melvin Laird, Wis., chairman of the House GOP Policy Committee; Senator George Murphy, R-Calif.; Senator Peter Dominick, R-Colo., and Ronald Reagan, movie star and prominent prospect for governor of California.

The American Conservative Union already has 7,000 members and \$170,000 in its treasury, with another \$300,000 pledged. Of the cash in hand, more than \$35,000 came from small contributors.

The ACU office in Washington is fully staffed and going full-blast. Immediate principal activity is vigorous support of the fight against the Johnson Administration's bill to repeal Section 11(b) — empowering states to enact right-to-work laws. Ammunition prepared by Professor Sylvester Petro, New York University Law School, is being made available to opponents, regardless of party.

While no decision has been made on the New York mayoralty candidacy of liberal Republican Representative John Lindsay, ACU insiders are betting their organization will declare against him.

What stand will be taken on William Buckley Jr., conservative candidate, will be determined at the directors' meeting.

Pending that, Bruce is conferring with National Chairman Bliss on establishing an amicable working relationship. Bruce contends the Republican party will need the active support of all elements to make impressive gains in the next year's crucial congressional and state elections.

ACU directors include four original Goldwater backers — Chairman Bruce, Representative John Ashbrook, Ohio, former Texas State Chairman Peter O'Donnell, and William Rusher, publisher of the National Review. Also former Representative Katherine St. George, N.Y., John Davenport, associ-

ate editor of Fortune magazine, Professor Stefan Possony, director, Hoover Institute of Peace, War and Revolution, Stanford University.

Charles Lichenstein, research director of the Republican National Committee during the Goldwater period, has been named to a similar role in the Goldwater-sponsored Free Society Association — headed by Denison Ritchie, the Arizona's campaign manager.

Lichenstein, one-time Central Intelligence Agency analyst, was one of Goldwater's closest and most controversial campaign advisers. He was repeatedly under fire in inner party councils during the stormy 1964 presidential battle.

In the FSA, Lichenstein's title is Director of Publications. His assistant is Miss Anne Brunstad, also a former CIA analyst. Lichenstein is credited as viewing the FSA as "an educational organization and the voice of the conservative movement," and the Conservative Union as "the activist group."

ACU leaders have a very different concept of their organization.

At the strong urging of National Chairman Ray Bliss, the Conference of Republican Governors has agreed to abandon a plan to set up a separate campaign organization to solicit funds and direct the 1968 campaign for state executives. That was the aim of Idaho's Governor Robert Smylie, conference chairman, who also talked of opening a Washington office. Bliss approved Smylie's basic concept, but persuaded him and other conference leaders to associate their organization directly with the National Committee.